NEWS ANALYSIS: NO. 1-1113 JULY 16, 1976
CHARLES MEDD/NEW YORK

DEMOCRATS TRY UNITY

ANNCR: THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY IS OVER: THE SPEECHES HAVE BEEN DELIVERED, THE APPLAUSE AND CHEERING HAVE DIED DOWN-- AND CHARLES MEDD, WHO WAS THERE, HAS THIS REACTION.

VOICE: THE FINAL SPEECH BEGAN WITH THE WORDS "MY NAME IS JIMMY CARTER, AND I'M RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT" -- THE SAME WORDS HEARD AROUND THIS COUNTRY FOR THE PAST YEAR, AS AN OBSCURE EX-GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA TRIED TO IDENTIFY HIMSELF. THAT JIMMY CARTER NO LONGER NEEDED THAT INTRODUCTION AS HE ACCEPTED HIS PARTY'S HIGHEST HONOR CLIMAXED ONE OF THE MOST AMAZING POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS IN MODERN TIMES.

FOR FOUR DAYS, THE DEMOCRATS ABANDONED THEIR FAMILIAR BRAND OF INFIGHTING IN FAVOR OF PARTY HARMONY. THEY EMBRACED A CANDIDATE MOST OF THEM HARDLY KNEW AND MANY OTHERS OPPOSED JUST A FEW MONTHS AGO. AND WITHOUT DEBATE THEY EMBRACED A PLATFORM THAT OFFERED SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY AND OFFENDED NO ONE, DESPITE SUCH CONTRADICTIONS AS THE PROMISE OF FULL EMPLOYMENT WITHOUT INFLATION, AND A STRONGER NATIONAL DEFENSE WITH A REDUCED MILITARY BUDGET.

TO DESCRIBE AND DEFEND THEIR PLATFORM, THE DEMOCRATS BROUGHT TO THE PODIUM A WIDE RANGE OF PARTY PERSONALITIES AND PHILOSOPHIES -- FROM THE URBANE FORMER AMBASSADOR AVERILL HARRIMAN TO THE EARTHY POLITICAL BOSS, CHICAGO MAYOR RICHARD DALEY; FROM ALABAMA'S ONE-TIME SEGREGATIONIST GOVERNOR GEORGE WALLACE, TO THE WIDOW OF THE SLAIN CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER, MARTIN LUTHER KING.

AFTER TWO NATIONAL CONVENTIONS MARKED BY DISSENTION OVER RACE, THE VIETNAM WAR, THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT AND THE YOUTH CULTURE, THE DEMOCRATS ARE TRYING TOGETHERNESS. IF THE EMPHASIS ON PARTY UNITY PRODUCED A CONVENTION NOTABLY LACKING IN EXCITEMENT, ITS POTENTIAL POLITICAL DIVIDENDS ARE OBVIOUS. THE AMERICAN PUBLIC -- WEARIED BY

YEARS OF UPHEAVAL -- IS CLEARLY IN THE MOOD TO CLOSE RANKS. WHETHER OR NOT JIMMY CARTER CAN FULFILL THAT PROMISE, HIS NOMINATION ITSELF IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. (OPT) NOT SINCE EIGHTEEN SIXTY-EIGHT HAS EITHER MAJOR PARTY NOMINATED SOMEONE FROM THE DEEP SOUTH FOR THE PRESIDENCY. A FULL CENTURY AFTER THE CIVIL WAR, THAT REGION HAS FINALLY BEEN PARDONED.

IN A SIMILAR WAY, NEW YORK -- THE HOST CITY FOR THE CONVENTION -- MAY, TOO, HAVE EARNED A PARDON. OVER THE PAST WEEK, THE TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DELEGATES, PARTY OFFICIALS AND REPORTERS WHO GATHERED HERE, MANY FOR THE FIRST TIME, HAD A GOOD LOOK AT THIS GREAT CITY AND FOUND VERY LITTLE TO JUSTIFY ITS REPUTATION FOR INEFFICIENCY, COLDNESS AND SIN. THE VISITORS' REACTION -- ALL OF IT CONVEYED BY THE NATIONAL MEDIA -- MIGHT JUST WIN FOR NEW YORK WHAT JIMMY CARTER HAS WON FOR THE SOUTH. (END OPT)

WHAT THIS NEW MOOD OF UNITY THE DEMOCRATS HAVE PROJECTED AND WHAT THE CARTER CANDIDACY WILL MEAN IN NOVEMBER, WHEN AMERICAN VOTERS CHOOSE ANOTHER PRESIDENT, DEPENDS ON TWO UNKNOWN FACTORS. THE FIRST IS THE REPUBLICAN RIVAL AND THE KIND OF CAMPAIGN HE MOUNTS FOLLOWING NEXT MONTH'S CONVENTION IN KANSAS CITY. THE OTHER UNKNOWN IS JIMMY CARTER HIMSELF. HE MAY BE THE ARCHITECT OF THIS YEAR'S POLITICAL MIRACLE, BUT TO MOST AMERICANS HIS ABILITY TO LEAD AND THE DIRECTION HE WOULD TAKE US HAS YET TO BE TESTED.

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